



Using A Design Based Research Approach To Provide Reading Strategy Training For Learners Of Arabic: A Work In Progress

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Reading and Language Learning

- Reading is seen as the most powerful skill which provides a language learner with strong foundation so that higher levels of language proficiency may be reached (Krashen, 2004, Tu'aymah, 1989).
- In the context of the learning of Arabic as a foreign language (AFL) in Malaysia, reading skill is considered the most pertinent skill to be acquired in comparison with other language skills (Nik Mohd Rahimi, 1998).

However..

- Review of the literature and personal experiences related to the teaching and learning of reading in Arabic as a foreign language context (AFL) in Malaysia reveal several observations...

Malaysian AFL learners demonstrate...

- **negative attitude towards reading in Arabic** (Nik Farhan, Nik Hanan, & Abdul Rahman, 2006; Siti Salwa, 2009);
- **poor level of reading comprehension** (Abdul Malek, 1996; Esmat, 2004; Nasimah, 2006; Raja Mohd Fauzi, Mowafak & Mohamed Amin, 1999);
- **lack of awareness and use of reading strategies** (Nik Farhan, in progress; Nik Hanan, Nik Farhan, & Nadwah, 2009; Ruhimah, 2004);

The teaching of reading in AFL classrooms:

- reflect a primary focus on grammar (Al-Batal, 2006).
- Is on prescribed text teaching (Ismaiel, 2003).
- is teacher-centred and focus on direct knowledge transmission.

So...

- It was observed that Arabic language instructors often spend most of the class time on explaining the texts, and are **not familiar with reading strategies** as such, and seldom teach any strategy directly in class
- Less attention is driven towards the building of Arabic language skills including skills in reading that could impede the development of such skills in learners of Arabic.

Implications

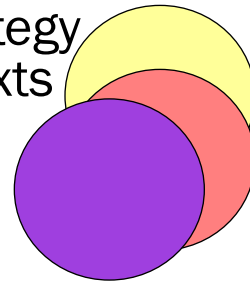
- Taking this into account, identifying or developing a strategic approach to learning and teaching reading in Arabic language is essential.

Thus..

This research proposes that ‘training students to employ effective use of reading strategies’ through – reading strategies training - might be a promising solution

Purpose of Study

to design, develop and evaluate a practical research based instructional module for fostering skilled strategy use in reading Arabic texts among AFL learners

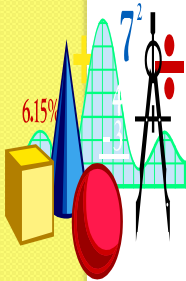


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What is Design Based Research?

- Educational design research is perceived as
‘the systematic study of designing, developing and evaluating educational interventions, -such as programs, teaching-learning strategies and materials, products and systems– as solutions to such problems, which also aims at advancing our knowledge about the characteristics of these interventions and the processes to design and develop them (Plomp, 2009: 9).

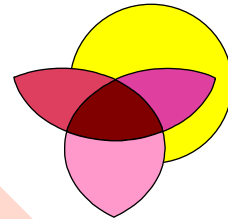
The methodology..



- ◎ **Design** - Design & Development Approach
- ◎ **Aim** - refinement of theory & practice
- ◎ **Theory** : Key design principles
- ◎ **Practice** : High quality interventions

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Phases of Research (Reeves, 2006)



Analysis of
Practical
Problems by
Researchers
and
Practitioners in
Collaboration

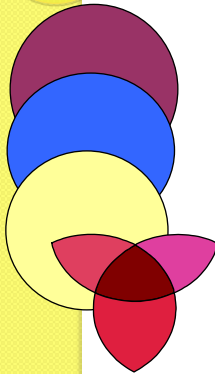
Development of
Solutions
Informed by
Existing Design
Principles

Iterative Cycles
of Testing and
Refinement of
Solutions in
Practice

Reflection to
Produce
"Design
Principles" and
Enhance
Solution
Implementation

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Research Objectives



1. **Analysis** Objective
2. **Design & Development** Objective
3. **Implementation & Evaluation** Objective
4. **Reflection & Refinement** Objective

See [Research Procedures.docx](#)

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1- Analysis of practical problems by researchers & practitioners in collaboration

- Exploratory phase (where problem diagnosis and articulation of theoretical foundation of the research took place) (Nor Aziah, 2007a).
- Researchers' experiences were re-examined and relevant literature was studied in order for the solutions to be hypothesized.
- To understand the problem from the learning perspective (learners' problem), findings of several studies that investigate Malaysian AFL learners reading strategy use (see, e. g., Nik Farhan, in progress; Ruhimah, 2004) were pondered upon.
- Pre findings:
 - See [Table Strategies to Help Students 2.docx](#)
 - See [Initial Design Principles](#)

2 - Development of solutions informed by existing design principles

- Currently, the study is in its second phase, where an instructional module is designed and developed based on earlier analysis and prescribed solutions (Nor Aziah, 2007a).
- Involves an extensive collaboration with experts, instructors and learners.
- The instructional module on reading strategies training is designed as an exploration of the emerging themes identified in Phase 1.
- Two experts interviewed in Phase 1 were also elected as reviewers for the instructional module.
- At the time being, only one set of the instructional module has been developed, and is in the process of being tested through a 'concept walkthrough'.
- All in all, being a part of a doctoral dissertation, this study intends to develop only two more sets of the instructional module; taking several factors into consideration (time, research, scope, resources).
 - See [Example of the Instructional Module](#)

3 - Iterative cycles of testing and refinement of solutions in practice

- This phase involves the implementation of the instructional module to a group of university-level AFL learners (10-15 students).
- During this phase, the learners will be taught the use of reading strategies outlined by the module by an experienced instructor in the field of the teaching of Arabic reading.
- Interview, observation and collection of written feedbacks from participants will provide data throughout Phase 3.
- At the writing of this paper, the implementation has not taken place yet and is scheduled to begin in three weeks time.
- Iterations of data collection and analysis in Phase 3 will allow for review and modification of the guiding principles under investigation.
- Data will be collected in a cycle of five to seven weeks.



4 - Reflections to produce 'design principles' and enhance solution implementation

- In this phase, inputs suggested by the instructor and learners' will be utilized to modify or change certain aspects of the module. o
 - Finally, a revised set of design principles will be presented.
 - The study will then move briefly through Phase 4 at the first iteration, tentative in its identification of design principles, to return to Phase 2 – design of the reading strategy training intervention i. e. the instructional module.
 - Emerging understandings will be checked with colleagues and practitioners as the second cycle of the intervention is designed and developed. Data will also be collected through guided journal entries, interviews and focus group interviews.
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Thank you
